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LETTER DATED 14 MARCH 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SAUDI ARABIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In accordance with paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 678 (1990), and pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the said resolution, I have pleasure in transmitting to you herewith an additional report on the progress of the military operations undertaken by the armed forces operating under the command of General Khalid bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, commander of the joint forces and the theatre of operations, during the period 18-24 February 1991.

I should be grateful if you would kindly have this report circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samir SHIHABI
Permanent Representative

Annex

Sir,

As you are aware, each of the States concerned has been notifying the Security Council, separately and consecutively, of the extent of the progress achieved in the measures that they are taking pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 678 (1990).

However, given the fact that the allied forces are stationed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under our command, and in view of the joint endeavours that they are undertaking to liberate the sister State of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation and to restore international peace and security in the region, we have deemed it appropriate to save time and simplify the formalities, while achieving the same objective, by confining ourselves to a single joint report on all the collective measures and on the progress of the military operations of those forces, which I shall prepare and transmit to you, on behalf of those forces, in my capacity as commander of the joint forces and the theatre of operations.

Since the allied forces have a duty to implement the Security Council resolutions, during the fifth week of the operations the High Command diligently continued to weaken the Iraqi military machine and prepare the way for the ground campaign to recover the State of Kuwait while, at the same time, urging the pilots to avoid civilian targets and populated areas with a view to preventing civilian casualties or damage to civilian institutions.

I have pleasure in submitting the following first joint report:

The operations from 4 Sha'ban A.H. 1411 (18 February 1991) to 10 Sha'ban A.H. 1411 (24 February 1991) were conducted as follows:

1. Military operations

Air

The Royal Saudi Air Force flew 1,147 sorties against targets inside Iraq and Kuwait.

Sea

The Royal Saudi Navy took part in the naval operations. The total number of naval aircraft sorties on rescue missions and patrols amounted to 730.

Land

1. A mechanized infantry division, an armoured division and a commando brigade belonging to the Egyptian armed forces participated in the artillery bombardments of the enemy and also took part in the overall offensive.

2. A division and a commando brigade belonging to the Syrian armed forces participated in engagements with enemy patrols and also took part in the overall offensive.

3. Saudi ground forces carried out artillery bombardments, engaged a number of enemy patrols and opened several breaches in the enemy's positions. They joined in the overall offensive as part of the joint forces.

During the past week, there was a notable intensification of engagements on the Saudi-Kuwaiti border, and also inside Kuwait itself, with a view to inflicting maximum losses on the Iraqi ground forces stationed there. The aerial bombardments also continued inside Iraq and Kuwait, prior to the commencement of the ground campaign, with a view to minimizing human casualties.

2. Human casualties

These casualties were caused primarily by six Scud missiles which the Iraqi aggressor launched into the territory of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The human casualties resulting from the battles that took place from the beginning of the offensive to the time of preparation of this report amounted to four killed, five wounded and four personnel carriers destroyed.

3. Material damage

This damage consisted mainly in the destruction of a school, as well as structural damage to neighbouring buildings in the city of Riyadh, caused by a Scud missile launched by the enemy at 4.45 a.m. on Sunday, 10 Sha'ban A.H. 1411 (24 February 1991).

4. Prisoners of war

The total number of Iraqi prisoners amounted to 141 officers and 1,899 other ranks, all of whom are receiving full care and attention and are being treated in accordance with the precepts of Islamic law and the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949. This treatment was commended by the team of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Wishing to satisfy myself that the prisoners were being treated in a humanitarian and dignified manner in keeping with our Islamic ideals and principles, I paid an inspection visit to them during which I reassured myself in regard to their situation and proper treatment and issued the necessary directives in that connection to the responsible officials.

I should be grateful if you would kindly have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) General Khalid bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz
Commander of the joint forces and the
theatre of operations